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Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

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Wednesday, 19 April 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Haley	(United States of America)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Sadykov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

The situation in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2017/283)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2017/283)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/283, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Kobler and Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya.

I now give the floor to Mr. Kobler.

Mr. Kobler: At the outset, I would like to congratulate the United States of America on presiding over the Security Council this month.

Members of the Council have received the latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2017/283). However, in my remarks, I would like to concentrate on some strategic lines and to provide recommendations for consideration by the Council.

Today, it is more important than ever to forge unity within Libya. Prior to the signing of the Libyan Political Agreement in Skhirat in 2015, Libya was a deeply divided country. The broad endorsement of the Libyan Political Agreement by Libyan stakeholders, signed with hope and confidence on 17 December 2015, continues today. The international community also continues to strongly support the Agreement and its institutions, and recognizes the Presidency Council as the sole national executive authority. The statements of the P-5 ambassadors to Libya and the political support and engagement of neighbouring countries, as well as the formation of a quartet comprised of the African Union, the League of Arab States, the European Union and the United Nations, are tangible reflections of international cohesion and commitment. We all share the same vision. We all share the same road map.

Libyans and the international community alike support the Agreement. Yes, it can be amended, but there is no alternative. There is no plan B. Moreover, there is no need for one. If the parties do not uphold their responsibilities under the Libyan Political Agreement, there is no reason to think that they will have any greater commitment to an alternative agreement.

There are positive signs elsewhere, too. The fight against terrorism is largely successful in Sirte and Benghazi. Da'esh no longer controls territory in Libya. That is a significant achievement as we move towards the end of the presence of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Libya. The security situation in Tripoli is at least contained. Looking at the economy, oil production has increased and has potential for further growth. The National Oil Corporation has achieved much and demonstrates the need to maintain the unity of sovereign institutions. Budgetary resources have been released by the Central Bank of Libya, including salaries in all parts of the country.

Despite what I have said, we should be honest and see that the optimism and confidence of Skhirat has faded. Instead, I see frustration, disappointment and sometimes anger. Often they are justified. The sharp horizon established by the Libyan Political Agreement has blurred, and the path forward is no longer clear for many. Today, uncertainty has contributed to fragmentation and dissent, contributing to a dangerous political power vacuum. Violent clashes, social unrest and increasing criminality remain common in too many parts of Libya.

The institutions of the Libyan Political Agreement must deliver, if they are to maintain credibility and legitimacy. The divisions in many of the institutions have impacted their ability to govern. Instead of functioning for the good of the nation, many have begun to perceive the power-sharing agreements through the interests of one group over the other.

The results of those divisions are setting Libya down a worrying path. Public services, including access to electricity, health, education and water, are failing many. The economy continues to decline. The gross domestic product has lost over half of its value since 2012. The lack of liquidity prevents Libyans from accessing their salaries. The dinar is losing value. The shadow economy and rampant corruption are growing.

Political divisions also threaten the cohesiveness of sovereign financial institutions, such as the Central Bank, the National Oil Corporation and the Libyan Investment Authority. It is difficult to produce a realistic common budget for the whole of Libya. The political vacuum complicates efforts to create a united security force and has encouraged some to advocate for a military solution to the Libyan crisis. History does not tolerate a power vacuum. Armed groups are gaining power, and Libya is witnessing new and heightened violence. The gains made against terrorist groups, including in Benghazi and Sirte, will ultimately be lost, if some actors continue to strive for power at the expense of institutions and civil society.

The competition for the control of national resources will trigger renewed violence if the root causes are not addressed. The use of violence to obtain short-term objectives must end. It is time to get back to politics. It is time to address the core issues, and it is time to get back to the spirit of Skhirat. Having worked on Libya since the signature of the Libyan Political Agreement, I am convinced that Libya will not solve its problems alone. It needs the strong, united, consistent, robust and concrete support of the international community; action and commitment, not merely papers and meetings and workshops; partnership, not interference; antibiotics, not aspirin. Please allow me to suggest seven brief points on the way forward for the Council's consideration.

First, the Libyan Political Agreement must remain the framework for a negotiated settlement. I am encouraged that all important stakeholders and the overwhelming majority of the Libyan population share that opinion. Let us build on that consensus. The Prime Minister and the President of the House of Representatives have both confirmed their commitment, as has the Commander of the Libyan National Army, Field Marshal Haftar, during our meeting last Thursday in Benghazi. The Head of the State Council has expressed his agreement, as have almost all representatives of significant institutions and constituencies. The Agreement is not perfect. There is a consensus that amendments are needed and that those amendments can only be done by the Libyans themselves. We are working to create a consensus on the mechanisms to enable the amendment. That process must be inclusive, and those deciding must have the capacity and commitment to implement their decisions.

Secondly, all security actors must refrain from any action that might trigger violence and escalation. The temperature in Libya must be lowered, if political discussions are to resume. Efforts to expand control through violence are short-sighted and counterproductive. I am particularly concerned about the developments in southern Libya, both military and humanitarian. The much neglected south just cannot take more. There will be no unity through violence. The parties need to step back and talk.

Thirdly, the security track aimed at stabilizing the situation and creating conditions for the formation of a unified security apparatus must be urgently reinvigorated. While progress on security is most effective when combined with advances on the political track, confidence-building steps must be taken immediately. The formation of a committee in Tripoli to supervise the ceasefire is a good basis on which to move forward with more structured security arrangements for the city and a means to strengthen the authority of the Presidency Council.

Fourthly, the economy and financial situation of the country needs to be stabilized. Agreement on a budget framework for 2017 was a significant step forward. However, budgetary and public-finance mechanisms must be improved in order to ensure unified and equitable financing of services and the economy, with funds distributed fairly and transparently to all regions of Libya. In that regard, I encourage a more constructive cooperation between Libya's financial and economic institutions and the Presidency Council.

Fifthly, national reconciliation must be integrated decisively at all levels. The ability of Libyan leaders to mediate local ceasefires is a great asset and has prevented many sparks from creating fires. Libyans will soon start a comprehensive bottom-up national reconciliation initiative supported by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL).

Sixthly, public services, security and governance must start improving at the local levels. In a country with a legacy of weak national institutions, local authorities remain among the most respected and effective actors. We must support them. Democratically elected mayors

must be given authority, funds and responsibility. In that context, it is important that international partners be prepared to support the Presidency Council, if requested, and to deploy expertise, not only outside Libya, but also in Libya on the ground.

My seventh and last point is particularly important. It is my wish that the international community move beyond containment. The focus on the fight against terrorism and migration alone is not enough. Migration and terrorism are symptoms, not root causes.

I am grateful for the many initiatives and efforts of, in particular, neighbouring countries and regional organizations over the past weeks and months to bring political and military stakeholders closer together. Now, I believe it is time for the United Nations to take the lead again. The United Nations is uniquely placed in Libya. However, we need the united support of the Security Council and the wider international community. The women and men of Libya, its wise elders and its vibrant youth deserve a better life, and they deserve it now.

I would like, once again, to thank the Security Council for its unwavering support for my colleagues and myself. I thank Ambassador Skoog and the Council presidency, as well as all of the stakeholders all over Libya, for the cooperation they have extended throughout the country. I thank them for their support for the Libyan Political Agreement and for the opportunity and confidence that they have given all of us at UNSMIL to serve the people of Libya.

The President: I thank Mr. Kobler for his time, his leadership and the insight that he has provided today.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Skoog.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): My report is slightly more dry than the one we just heard, I am afraid.

In accordance with paragraph 24 (e) of resolution 1970 (2011), I have the duty to report to the Security Council on the work of the Committee established by the same resolution. The report covers the period from 7 December 2016 to 19 April 2017, during which time the Committee members dealt with various aspects of the sanctions regime via the silence procedure.

First, with regard to the arms embargo, during the period under review, the Committee approved a request for an exemption from the arms embargo submitted under paragraph 9 (c) of resolution 1970 (2011) by the Netherlands. The Committee also received two post-delivery notifications from the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and from Malta, respectively, the latter having been submitted together with that of the European Union delegation. Those notifications were for items that have previously been exempted by the Committee under paragraph 13 (b) of resolution 2009 (2011) and paragraph 9 (c) of resolution 1970 (2011). The Committee further responded to three requests from Tunisia, Turkey and Greece for guidance on the scope and implementation of the arms embargo.

Concerning the assets freeze, the Committee has not yet concluded its consideration of a request by Switzerland for exemption, in accordance with paragraph 19 (b) of resolution 1970 (2011), in relation to the assets of the Libya Africa Investment Portfolio. The Committee had no objection to a notification submitted by the United Kingdom, under paragraph 19 (a) of resolution 1970 (2011), in relation to the same listed identity. Regarding an exemption request received from Canada, pertaining to an asset owned by a listed individual, the Committee sought additional details prior to further consideration of the matter.

On the travel ban, during the period under review, the Committee approved an update to its fourth implementation assistance notice, which relates to the travel ban measure. Upon the request of Libya, the Committee also approved the extension of a travel ban waiver for a listed individual who is currently undergoing medical treatment in Egypt until 23 August.

On the subject of communication with Libya, I would also like to mention that the Committee has sought information from the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations concerning the officials authorized to sign off on documentation relating to any future arms embargo exemption requests, pursuant to paragraph 8 of resolution 2174 (2014). That was done as a follow-up to a recommendation made by the Panel Of Experts established pursuant to paragraph 24 of resolution 1973 (2011) in its interim report. The Committee has also shared with the Permanent Mission details concerning all previous arms embargo and assets freeze exemption requests considered by the Committee. Lastly, the Committee has also consulted with the Permanent Mission on the subject of oversight of certain Libyan public and financial institutions, also pursuant to a recommendation of the Panel.

Finally, the Committee received two letters from Malta concerning the activities of two vessels that

reportedly were illicitly attempting to export petroleum products and fuel from Libya to other destinations. The Committee has not yet completed its consideration of that matter.

The President: I thank Mr. Skoog for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I thank Mr. Kobler and Mr. Skoog for their briefings.

At the outset, I ensure Mr. Kobler of the United Kingdom's full support of his work and reiterate its commitment to the Libyan Political Agreement — the sole framework for a political solution to the situation in Libya. Sadly, as he has made clear, its implementation remains mixed, at best. I very much agree with all seven points of hos seven-point agenda. As the penholder for Libya, we see three interlinked areas of concern: security, the economy and the political process.

In 2017, security has deteriorated significantly, particularly now in the South, where there are renewed escalating clashes, which are edging the country towards civil war. The United Kingdom condemns all such violence, as well as threats of military action and reports of gross human rights abuses by armed groups. Such acts have no place in the Libya of today, and we are clear that the military and other security structures need to be under civilian and political oversight. As the Ambassadors to Libya of China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States said last week, there is a difference between acts against the terrorist threat and acts that can lead to further deterioration in Libya.

On tackling terrorism, it is important to recognize the defeat of Da'esh in Sirte, and I pay tribute to all involved and acknowledge the many lives lost in that effort. But in spite of that success, we are now faced with a threat that is dispersed across Libya. Those who continue to undermine effective governance in Libya are feeding the terrorist threat by creating ungoverned spaces. It is a threat that extends not only across Libya but across the region as a whole. Such ungoverned spaces create conditions for human trafficking and criminal networks to profit from the political and security vacuum in parts of Libya. Irregular migration can only be tackled properly by a strong and stable Government.

Turning to my second point, the economy also remains vulnerable to the volatile political and security situation. We need to see real improvements. The Presidency Council and the Central Bank must work cooperatively to address the liquidity crisis and ensure that public services like water and electricity are sustained throughout Ramadan. We need to see an end to parallel institutions undermining the Presidency Council. There has been some progress, including the dispersal of the budgets in the early months of 2017 and the economic dialogue on the detail of fiscal and monetary policy now taking place in Tripoli, but it is clear that more steps are needed.

Throughout, it is crucial that Libya's oil resources remain neutral and be used to benefit the whole country. The continued unity of the National Oil Corporation is essential to ensuring that revenues be used for the national good. We call for much-needed investment in the maintenance of oil infrastructure to help increase national exports and reduce the drain on the economy.

Turning to my final point, the common thread in both the security and the economic situations is, of course, the political process, but I am pleased to reiterate here in the Chamber the United Kingdom's continued support for the Presidency Council and the Government Of National Accord, headed by Prime Minister Serraj, as the legitimate executive authorities under the Libyan Political Agreement, in line with resolution 2259 (2015).

But as the security and economic instability illustrate, Libya needs urgent progress towards full political reconciliation now more than ever. We support early signs of progress to bridge political differences, including regional efforts within the framework of the United Nations-led political process and reengagement by Libya's legitimate institutions, the House Of Representatives and the High State Council, with preparations for dialogue.

We have a difficult and long road ahead, so we urge all parties to commit to progress. We underline our firm opposition to any attempt to disrupt the political process. All those who have a role to play, including those still outside the Libyan Political Agreement, must engage constructively and in the spirit of compromise. The international community, as Mr. Kobler reminded us, must continue to support them.

We welcome the Secretary-General's commitment to Libya as one of his personal priorities, and we reiterate our full support for the central role of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya in advancing the political process in Libya. As the penholder on

this issue in the Council, we will carry on playing our part. We will continue to monitor the situation in Libya closely. We will support all efforts to reach a more inclusive political settlement within the framework of Libyan Political Agreement and we will work with the Presidency Council and the Government of National Accord in their efforts to serve the people of Libya, because the continued support of the Security Council and the wider international community will remain vital if we are to secure a better future for all Libyans.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank Ambassador Skoog, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, and Mr. Martin Kobler for their valuable briefings today. I would also like to thank Mr. Kobler for his tireless efforts, along with those of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, to restore stability to our brothers in Libya.

We highlight the efforts made by Egypt over the past few months to provide the necessary support to enable our brothers in Libya to reach a settlement based on the Libyan Political Agreement, re-establish stability in the country and restore Libya's natural status in the Arab world, Africa and the international community. Our efforts to bring our Libyan brothers together have always relied on the historical link between the peoples of Libya and Egypt.

The dialogue sponsored by Egypt has continued with the participation of all the Libyan national factions in the east, west and south of the country, with the participation of all legitimate institutions under the Libyan political agreement. One of the most important results of that dialogue is the creation of a dialogue committee to discuss amendments to the Libyan Political Agreement, including to the provisions regarding the supreme command of the Libyan National Army and other issues that have hindered the implementation of that agreement. Such a committee would comprise 30 members, designated by the House of Representatives and the High State Council.

In order for this endeavour to be successful, all Libyan parties must show the necessary political will and ability to assume the responsibility of choosing members of the proposed committee. They must also show flexibility if they are to facilitate the work of the committee, keeping in mind the best interests of the country. If this endeavour is to be successful, international and regional support is also absolutely necessary. In that regard, we would like to express our appreciation for the constructive efforts of Algeria and Tunisia and other regional efforts undertaken through the mechanism set up by Libya's neighbours, which held its most recent meeting in Cairo, as well as the efforts of the League of Arab States and the African Union.

At a time when Egypt is seeking to establish the necessary conditions for distancing the Libyan political dialogue from narrow interests fuelled by certain regional parties, these same regional parties known to all continue to play a subversive role in Libya. A clear example of this situation is the recent attack by extremist elements on the oil crescent area of the country in March, at a time when the Libyan parties were preparing to launch a dialogue based on the agreements reached in Cairo. This attack came after the Libyan National Army had been able to place the oil facilities under the authority of the National Oil Corporation for the benefit of all Libyans. These subversive actions against Libya are clear and explicit, and the Security Council must assume its role and compel all these subversive regional powers to rethink their positions and avoid any manipulation of the resources of the Libyan people and of the region.

Occasional instability in the capital, Tripoli, shows the dangers of allowing militias to blackmail and terrorize Libyan civilians. Egypt believes that international efforts should focus on supporting the construction of professional-calibre national security institutions. Egypt believes that the Libyan National Army should be at the heart of any unified Libyan armed forces under the supervision of elected civilian authorities. The National Army has proven its patriotism more than once, whether by successfully combating terrorists in the eastern part of the country or by ensuring the return of oil facilities to the authority of the National Oil Corporation.

It goes without saying that in order to eliminate the terrorism of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and other groups posing a threat to Libya, a genuine national effort must be carried out, and we believe that the Libyan National Army is in the best position to fulfil such a role. Therefore, the international community must recognize that in order to eliminate the dangers of terrorism and organized crime originating from Libya, the highest degree of support must be provided to the Army as soon as possible.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Martin Kobler, for his very illuminating briefing, for his tireless commitment and for the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2017/283).

For my part, I will discuss the security, political and economic situation in Libya, which we consider to be a cause for concern, and propose some possible lines of action towards which I believe we are converging collectively and which we must urgently implement.

From a security point of view, we are particularly concerned about the developments taking place in the south of the country, while major progress had been made elsewhere. In Tripoli, the Government of National Accord contributed to the adoption of a globally respected ceasefire and is setting up security institutions, including the Presidential Guard, which France is helping to train. These efforts, in conjunction with the United Nations and the European Union, are essential to protecting the institutions and the people of Libya. Libyan forces have also made significant progress in the fight against terrorism, particularly in Sirte and Benghazi.

On the other hand, for several weeks now, skirmishes among Libyan armed groups, fighting each other instead of uniting against terrorism, confirm the dangerous temptation to take up the military solution. Shows of strength lead only to political deadlock and chaos in terms of security, creating fertile soil for the resurgence of terrorism. Reckless armed offensives, such as those which took place recently in Sabha, in southern Libya, could only cause things to boil over, thereby endangering the political process. This escalation must cease immediately to allow for dialogue and national reconciliation, and it is our urgent responsibility to so inform the Libyan parties. In this respect, the role of Libya's neighbouring countries is invaluable in achieving a return to peace. We welcome in particular the efforts of Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia.

At the political level, a consensus is emerging around amending elements of the Libyan Political Agreement in order to make the institutions more effective and more representative, which is a step in the right direction. However, several obstacles remain. The Government of National Accord, which was the result of the Skhirat Agreement, which we all recognize, regularly finds itself in difficulty. The Parliament, which today draws its legitimacy from this inter-Libyan political agreement, seems to be constrained in its efforts to promote dialogue. France denounces actions aimed at undermining institutions that were established based on the Skhirat Agreement, which reduce the chances of getting out of the political impasse. In this context, we fully support the work of the United Nations to mediate between Libyans and to coordinate all regional and international initiatives. We welcome the integration of the European Union into the troika, which has now become the quartet.

Finally, on the economic side, progress has been made with the adoption of the 2017 budget by the Government of National Accord, but certain developments call for the utmost vigilance. The National Oil Corporation, the only recognized actor in the field, is threatened in its full exploitation of oil under the supervision of the Government of National Accord and is torn between the various factions of power. Relations between the Central Bank and the Government of National Accord remain tense, although the so-called economic dialogue is working to smooth things out. It is essential to preserve economic and financial institutions and ensure that they operate under the control of the Government. Oil money must be for building the State, for the sake of the Libyan people and its prosperity; it is not for financing a war economy or trafficking of any kind.

Furthermore, I would like to echo the Secretary-General's report in denouncing human trafficking in Libya. We call on the Libyan authorities to do their utmost to ensure that migrants are treated with dignity on Libyan soil. This is a priority with respect to the protection and promotion of human rights and the fight against organized crime. In this context, we have to ask, how do we get out of this crisis? A reaffirmed commitment on the part of the international community is essential, urgent and based on three complementary concepts.

First, as we have repeatedly affirmed, the solution to the Libyan conflict can only be a political one. Let us remember that the logic of the Skhirat Agreement is based on an agreement among Libyan political forces, excluding terrorists, around a new model of the distribution of power. It is therefore a choice in favour of dialogue and the refusal to use weapons. In this context, those who use weapons rather than dialogue and who undermine any hope of stabilization and peace must be identified.

We must therefore reaffirm our collective support, under United Nations auspices, for the collaborative review of the Libyan Political Agreement. Accordingly, we encourage dialogue between the Presidential Council, the Parliament of Tobruk and the High State Council so that each body can find its place. We come together around this table on this point and we are increasingly doing so, I believe. Neighbouring countries, particularly Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia, are stepping up their efforts to reach a political compromise in support of United Nations mediation. Once again, we commend those important efforts.

Secondly, it is incumbent on the Council to ensure the maintenance, effective enforcement and strengthening of the Council's mechanisms pertaining to the arms embargo, which we have established, and to combating the illegal exportation of oil pursuant to the resolutions, which we have adopted. In that regard, I must thank the Swedish chairmanship of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya. Libya's oil resources must remain under the exclusive control of the Government of National Accord and the National Oil Corporation of Tripoli, for the benefit of all Libyans. We must show collective resolve in ensuring the prevention of all forms of the illegal export of oil. We welcome the decision of the Presidency Council to appoint the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Government of National Accord, Mr. Mohamed Siala, as Libya's focal point for requesting exemptions from the embargo for the benefit of that Government.

Thirdly and finally, the Security Council must exercise all of its authority in the matter to encourage the Libyans to get along. In that regard, I vigorously commend the work of the Special Representative and encourage the work of the United Nations and the Secretary-General with regard to this issue, which are essential to revitalizing the political process and coordinating diplomatic efforts. Given the scale of the current challenges, the unity of the international community and the leading role of the United Nations, accompanied by new proposals, are more necessary than ever. The moment has come for renewed and strengthened commitment, which has taken on urgency, by the United Nations while we assume together our responsibilities.

Mr. Cardi (Italy): I would like to thank the Special Representative for his comprehensive briefing and continuous efforts in Libya.

Italy remains at the forefront of international support for the Libyan people, the institutions validated by Libyan Political Agreement in Skhirat and the mediation role of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. We are committed to the full implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement, while at the same time promoting reconciliation and inclusiveness.

My first point concerns the political and security track. Cohesive support from the international community is key to consolidating the results attained thus far so as to fight terrorism and achieve stability. Our message should therefore be very clear. First, the Presidency Council and the Government of National Accord, headed by Prime Minister Serraj, remain the sole legitimate executive authorities of Libya pursuant to resolution to 2259 (2015). Furthermore, we intend to support them as vigorously as ever in their crucial role in combating terrorism.

Secondly, we encourage initiatives aimed at consolidating the Skhirat framework and improving it where possible through finding workable solutions to outstanding issues, including strengthening inclusivity within the Libyan Political Agreement framework.

Thirdly, we promote the cooperation of the Presidency Council with all legitimate Libyan institutions to broaden its base of support and achieve a sustainable political settlement. There is no military solution to Libya's problems. A solution can be achieved only through inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation. We reject any attempt to use force to acquire political and territorial gains, and we emphasize the difference between acts against terrorist threats and those that can lead to the further deterioration of the situation in Libya.

We are following with concern the recent violence in the south and the area of Sabha. We call for full de-escalation and avoiding provocative actions. We welcome the ongoing efforts of neighbouring countries and regional organizations. Cohesive and coordinated international efforts to support the United Nations-mediated political process can foster a constructive attitude for the Libyan stakeholders towards fully implementing the Libyan Political Agreement.

Moreover, with regard to efforts aimed at reconciliation, we need to consolidate the progress achieved thus far by the country in very challenging circumstances. We have enhanced our capacity to reach out to the Libyan people and communities in

the entire country through our embassy in Tripoli. We deem it crucial to promote stability through engagement with all Libyan parties. We are regularly reaching out to the east and actively promoting dialogue and mutual understanding with key political and security figures, including General Haftar. We are encouraging a constructive approach including on the crucial issue of implementing the formal security setup outlined in the Libyan Political Agreement with unified and strengthened national security forces under civilian oversight.

In that regard, we echo the Secretary-General's report (S/2017/283) in welcoming progress on the formation of the Presidential Guard. We are also stepping up our humanitarian help in coordination with the Presidency Council, for example by offering medical treatment in Italy to injured Libyans, including those from the east who were involved in combating terrorism. We are also planning to step up our diplomatic presence in the east with a consulate and visa office in Tobruk.

We are also focusing on the south of Libya, another key strategic area of the country. We have repeatedly provided emergency aid to those fragile communities, and we are promoting initiatives to enhance dialogue with local municipalities. On 31 March, representatives of the Tebu and Awlad Sulayman tribes signed an agreement in Rome aimed at fostering reconciliation, combating terrorism and countering human trafficking. Tuareg representatives and Libya's Deputy Prime Minister representing the Presidency Council attended the ceremony in Rome.

Fourthly, concerning the economy, we remain concerned about the latest developments with regard to oil infrastructure. As new sparks of tensions rise, it is crucial to reiterate our support to the mandate of the National Oil Corporation, acting under the authority of the Presidency Council to manage the oil infrastructure, resources and revenues for the benefit of all Libyans in line with the Libyan Political Agreement. We support the Libyan economic dialogue to encourage cooperation between the Presidency Council, the Government of National Accord and the Central Bank of Libya. For the first time in years, the Government now has a budget to implement initiatives for the good of the Libyan people. We now call on the Government of National Accord and the Libyan Central Bank to stay the course and implement their agreement so as to keep the economy functioning and ensure that the necessary funds for Government activities bring the budget under control and end the liquidity crisis.

My last point concerns migration. We reiterate our concern about the smuggling of migrants and human trafficking that has endangered the lives of thousands of people in the Mediterranean Sea. In its efforts to combine security, solidarity and development, Italy remains committed to rescuing people at sea and helping migrants from the south to reach our shores. During Easter weekend alone, 8,500 people were rescued. But a stronger and shared effort is needed to enhance the capacity of the Libyan authorities to disrupt criminal networks that exploit illegal migration flows.

Through its leadership role in Operation Sophia of the European Union military operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean, Italy is therefore working in partnership with Libya to jointly address that common challenge, thereby fostering cooperation in the area of the prevention of illegal immigration, human trafficking, smuggling and border security, based on a comprehensive approach. We believe that it is a key step towards better managing migration flows, which would also sustain the stability of Libya, its neighbouring countries and the Mediterranean in general.

In conclusion, we can see that it is particularly important for the Libyans themselves to hear from the Council that we share the desire for a secure, democratic, prosperous and unified Libya in which the State authority and the rule of law prevail. That is indeed our challenge — to not let the Libyan people and institutions down while we facilitate their return to stability and prosperity and stand by their side in combating terrorism and criminal gangs of smugglers of human beings.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to thank the Special Representative, Martin Kobler, for his briefing and for his ongoing efforts and those of his team in a particularly difficult context. We would like also to thank Ambassador Olof Skoog for his report on the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya.

We take note with satisfaction of the near-normalization of the payment of salaries in the country and the recent successes achieved in the combat against terrorism.

However, more than a year after the signing of the Libyan Political Agreement, we continue to see a lack of meaningful progress in the political transition process following the formation of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord. The support that the Government has received within the Libyan political system has been minimal, which hinders the possibility of stabilizing the country in the short run and bringing it back onto the path of normality, as well as that of providing basic services for the people and ensuring their security.

The painful reality is that the authority of the Government barely extends beyond the buildings in which it is working in Tripoli. Paradoxically, the Political Agreement and the Government of National Accord have received more support from the international community than they have from within their country. It is essential that the new Government garner broader support among the population so as to achieve full legitimacy. Otherwise, it will be very difficult for it to ever govern the country or even the major part of its territory.

In the meantime, the violence and the fighting continue to spread; the dozens of militias on the ground are the ones who hold the true power in Libya. They are reaping benefits from the power that they do have and are working to further their economic interests in an attempt to control the oil business and the illegal traffic in migrants.

We are concerned at the fact that the deadline for the Tobruk House of Representatives' endorsement of the Libyan Political Agreement continues to be pushed back. A way should be found for this to take place and thereby leave aside once and for all a factor of institutional uncertainty and instability. To that end, every effort must made to achieve broad national reconciliation, taking account of the requests of and proposals by all parties. Today more than ever, dialogue is vital, as are negotiations. This is the only path to unity and stability.

In this context, the grave humanitarian situation of the Libyan people is worsening by the day, with more than 1 million people in need of urgent assistance. The situation of migrants for whom Libya is a country of origin and of those — the majority — for whom it is a country of transit to Europe, who are fleeing hunger, war and political crises on the African continent, remains a source of despair. On a daily basis, we witness tragic episodes that kill dozens or even hundreds of people, including women and children. Hundreds of thousands of people are currently in Libya waiting to try to cross the Mediterranean. They are subject to mistreatment and to the gravest violations of their human rights. We condemn the activities of the mafias that engage in the illegal trafficking of migrants, a business whose volume appears to be continuing to grow in Libya.

Just a few days ago, the International Organization for Migration announced the existence of a slave market in which sub-Saharan migrants are trafficked for a few hundred dollars. This cannot and should not be tolerated in any form in the twenty-first century.

Despite the measures adopted in 2016, the number of migrants who drown when their rickety boats sink continues to grow. For this reason, in considering solutions to this problem, priority should be given to the human rights of migrants and refugees. Only a stabilization of Libyan political institutions will make it possible to significantly reduce the number of occurrences of this phenomenon and to set up adequate and more effective controls.

I wish to reiterate our support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and for the role of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, and we encourage the Special Representative to continue with his work jointly with Prime Minister Serraj and the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord. This will be pivotal in order for the Government of National Accord to acquire legitimacy throughout the country and tackle urgently the tremendous challenges that Libya faces, which include the combat against terrorism and the severe humanitarian, economic and security crisis that is affecting millions of people.

Against this backdrop, we deem it important to exercise great care in drawing up the new mandate of the Mission. To do so, it will be important to conduct a strategic review of the Mission, as envisioned in resolution 2323 (2016), which we believe would represent a valuable opportunity to bring the presence of the United Nations in Libya into line with the political, operational and security realities on the ground.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): I would like to thank Mr. Martin Kobler for his briefing. Japan supports the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to promote peace and stability in Libya. I would like to thank also Olof Skoog for his briefing on the activities of the Security Council

Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya.

More than a year has passed since the signing of the Libyan Political Agreement, and we have seen little progress. The political situation remains fluid, but there is an emerging trend, as we have heard today, namely, a broad consensus among the Libyans to amend certain elements of the Agreement.

In this regard, the agreement in principle between the House of Representatives and the High State Council to form a joint committee to work together to amend the Agreement by consensus is a noteworthy development. Japan believes that a Libyan-led process that ensures broad, inclusive and genuine consultations among the Libyan people is a prerequisite for achieving enduring peace. Japan looks forward to seeing the joint committee formed in that spirit.

The Libyan Political Agreement has now been given another chance, and we must make the utmost effort to support the Libyan parties in setting the course for progress. In this regard, Japan appreciates the continued engagement of the relevant parties, including both regional and international parties.

Japan is concerned about the deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation in Libya. This is the cost of the political stalemate. The international community cannot leave 1.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance suffering from unmet basic requirements such as medicine, water and food. To alleviate the suffering of the people, Japan will restart its economic assistance to Libya for the first time in three years. We will provide more than $4 million, including $1.4 million to the Stabilization Facility for Libya.

We also encourage the financial institutions in Libya to redouble their efforts to tackle the issue of funding and liquidity, so that the necessary services can be provided to the people in need.

The security situation remains precarious. The escalation of violence in Tripoli and the oil crescent is another cause of the political stalemate. The recent escalation in the southern region is of particular concern. It should be stressed that violence does not bring peace any closer. Japan urges the relevant parties to immediately stop acts of violence.

Japan continues to support the Presidency Council and the Government of National Accord as the legitimate authority under the Libyan Political Agreement. The Agreement is the key instrument in moving the process forward, and its framework should be upheld. Japan encourages UNSMIL to make further efforts to facilitate the Libyan-led process to implement the Agreement, in accordance with its mediation and good-offices mandate under resolution 2323 (2016). Japan, for its part, will continue to engage constructively in order to support the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement and alleviate the suffering of the Libyan people.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to thank Special Representative Kobler and Ambassador Skoog for their briefings and commends them for their efforts.

There has been limited progress on the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement, which was signed more than a year ago. The Libyan peace process is facing serious challenges. The political dialogue has run into major problems and the parties lack confidence. The security situation is fragile. Armed conflicts are escalating, the terrorist forces have still not been eradicated and arms proliferation continues to be a serious issue. China firmly supports Libya in its use of peaceful means to restore national security and stability, and commends all the Libyan stakeholders for their efforts to implement the Political Agreement. They should all work together with the aim of reversing the current negative trend and take proactive and effective measures to advance the peace process in Libya.

First, the only choice for a solution to the Libyan problem must be a political one. The Libyan political process should uphold the principle of Libyan ownership and leadership and an inclusive political dialogue should begin as soon as possible. All the parties should demonstrate sincerity and promote dialogue and negotiation in settling their differences. The relevant Security Council resolutions and the Libyan Political Agreement should serve as a foundation for finding a solution that is acceptable to all parties and will help to achieve national reconciliation.

Secondly, a ceasefire must be reached if the right conditions for restoring and maintaining the political dialogue are to be created. All Libyan stakeholders should exercise restraint and avoid resorting to force. They should put aside their differences, build mutual trust and cooperate in such areas as fighting terrorism

and protecting airfields, harbours and other critical economic infrastructure, in order to protect the interests of all Libyans.

Thirdly, the international community should provide constructive assistance, with the United Nations as the principal mediator. The United Nations Support Mission in Libya should conduct its work based on the mandate assigned to it by the Security Council. Regional organizations such as the League of Arab States and the African Union, as well as Libya's neighbours, should continue to promote peace, facilitate talks and encourage all parties in Libya to be flexible in dialogue and participate actively in national reconciliation efforts. The international community should respect Libya's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and increase support to it in order to help it strengthen its State governance and development capacities. China stands ready to work with the international community as a whole and to contribute to the restoration of State governance and the realization of peace, stability and development as soon as possible.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): I would like to begin by thanking Mr. Martin Kobler for his briefing and his commendable and tireless efforts, which we greatly appreciate.

The briefing we just heard from him provides a sobering assessment of the situation in Libya. Despite the efforts to reinvigorate the political process, the security situation continues to worsen across the country. We are particularly concerned about the recent military escalation in southern Libya, as well as the recurring violent clashes in the capital, including attempts to take over Government infrastructure, and the fighting in the oil crescent. It is imperative that we not allow such developments to run the risk of returning the country to full-scale conflict. The consequences would be disastrous both for the people of Libya and the security of the entire region.

As documented in the Secretary-General's report (S/2017/283), the civilian population of Libya is clearly paying a staggeringly high price as a result of this conflict. Millions of people have been affected, with 300,000 currently displaced by insecurity and violence. Illegal flows of arms into the country prolong the conflict and increase civilian suffering. We would like to remind all United Nations members of their responsibility to fully implement the Libya sanctions, including the arms embargo. A breakdown in the rule of law has resulted in all parties to the conflict committing widespread human rights abuses and unacceptable violations of international humanitarian law, including against children. Those responsible should be held to account. The decision of the International Criminal Court to intensify its work on Libya is more relevant than ever.

The security vacuum has also had dire consequences for Libya's many refugees and migrants, as has been mentioned here this morning. We are alarmed by the reports of arbitrary detention and unsafe conditions in migrant detention centres. We welcome the efforts of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya to investigate the allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation of women in those centres, and urge the parties to enable increased humanitarian access for international organizations such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration. As one of the 10 largest bilateral donors to Libya, Sweden stresses that all international assistance must be implemented in line with international law, including refugee law.

There is clearly no military solution to the conflict. The only viable way forward is through Libyan-led, United Nations-supported political negotiations based on the Libyan Political Agreement. The Security Council and the international community as a whole have a responsibility to come together in support of the Libyan Presidency Council and the Government of National Accord as the sole legitimate Government, in accordance with resolution 2259 (2015) and subsequent resolutions.

At the same time, we should be receptive to parties' calls for amendments to the Political Agreement that can ensure inclusivity. The Political Agreement's implementation should reflect the interests of all Libyans, women and men, and the whole of the country, including the South. It goes without saying that the details of any possible amendments are for the Libyan people to decide. We are encouraged by the parties' signs of increased willingness to engage in dialogue, as well as by the constructive support from neighbouring States and regional organizations. In that regard, we are happy to see the valuable inclusion of the European Union, Libya's neighbour and partner, in the quartet.

In order to respond to what we hope is an emerging readiness to move the process forward, the United

Nations must now urgently pursue a reinvigorated, broad and long-term approach to Libya. We are therefore encouraged by the Secretary-General's commitment to making Libya a priority for 2017. While reviewing its long-term approach, it is crucial that the United Nations remain fully engaged in the short term as well. It must be equipped to play a leading role, as Mr. Kobler said, in moving from containment to reinvigorating the political process in support of negotiations between the parties and coordinating international efforts. Time is of the essence.

Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine): I would like to thank Special Representative Kobler and Ambassador Skoog for their comprehensive briefings. It is disappointing that no substantive progress has been reached in Libya since our last meeting in February (see S/PV.7879). Despite many efforts, the situation has become even more unpredictable, and there is a visible danger that the situation in Libya, on all fronts, could deteriorate even further. However, we continue to believe there are ways to prevent that. How can we achieve that?

First, we still believe firmly that the political deadlock in Libya must be resolved through compromise and finding a consensus solution. It requires getting the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, the House of Representatives and other Libyan actors engaged around a process that addresses the core issues that are obstacles to the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement. We consider the political dialogue to be a good platform for a genuine discussion of this kind. In that regard, the main task of the United Nations should be to make sure that it talks to all parties and that the parties talk to each other as well.

The second and no less important point is ensuring the responsible engagement by those external actors capable of exercising influence to encourage the parties to sit around the negotiating table. It cannot be achieved by creating alliances of convenience but must be done by working in good faith based on an inclusive transition process. It is important to ensure the coherence of all efforts in a Libya-led process under the auspices of the United Nations.

Turning to security-related issues, my delegation strongly condemns the escalation of fighting in Sebha, the oil crescent, Jofra and other areas. The situation in Libya can have no military solution. We call on the parties to cease hostilities and join the negotiation process. Any delay in doing so will only result in greater suffering for the Libyan people. It is also worth noting that the volatile environment creates a fertile ground for the spread of terrorist activities. As we have learned from the latest Secretary-General's report (S/2017/283), after the liberation of Sirte, many fighters of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant moved to the south, and some of them have formed sleeper cells. That underscores the urgency of establishing coordinated security policies on the ground and setting up unified security structures.

We believe that Libya can overcome its current threats if it returns to the path of development. Development requires good partners. We welcome the fact that the Secretary-General is committed to engage.

In that regard, we look forward to the results of a system-wide strategic assessment review that will examine the role and shape the priorities for the United Nations Support Mission in Libya in both the short-term and the long-term.

Ms. Guadey (Ethiopia): Let me start by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Martin Kobler, for his comprehensive briefing on the latest developments in Libya and the activities of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. We commend his efforts in the search for a political solution to the Libyan crisis. We also thank Ambassador Skoog for his report on the activities of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011). We appreciate his leadership.

The deteriorating security situation and the continuing political stalemate in Libya remain a source of great concern. With the prevailing lawlessness and the existence of parallel and divided institutions, the possibility of Libya sliding back into conflict presents a serious risk, as the report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/283) has warned. We believe that the Libyan Political Agreement is still the only framework for ensuring a lasting political solution to the Libyan crisis. The need for renewed efforts to facilitate political dialogue and address the key controversial issues that continue to impede the implementation of the Agreement has already been recognized, but it is now time for taking concrete actions in that regard.

It is undoubtedly the Libyans who should resolve their own problems. There is no alternative to Libyan ownership of the process of resolution. However, careful coordination of regional and international efforts in support of the Libyan peace process in full recognition

of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity is vital. In that connection, we acknowledge the key role played by the neighbouring countries of Libya. It is in that spirit that we welcome their intensified efforts to stabilize the situation in the country. We also support the decision of the African Union High-level Committee on Libya to include neighbouring countries as members, recognizing their indispensable role in addressing the crisis.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of the efforts in support of Libya, it is imperative that there be enhanced coordination and coherence among all of the relevant regional and international stakeholders. In that context, we welcome the joint communiqué issued by the Libya quartet's meeting, held on 18 March in Cairo, which stressed the importance of a political solution. There can be no military solution to the conflict in Libya.

Finally, we remain concerned about the overall humanitarian situation in Libya, as well as the suffering and plight of refugees and migrants. Though the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant has brought tangible progress, the continued presence of that group and its sleeper cells still poses a serious threat. All of that underscores the urgent need to reinvigorate the political dialogue in order to restore peace and stability in Libya. There is a need for unity of purpose within the international community in supporting and encouraging all Libyan actors to constructively and seriously engage in searching for a lasting solution to the Libyan crisis.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Kobler and Mr. Skoog for their briefings.

We regret to note that, despite the efforts being made by the international community to resolve the internal political crisis in Libya, the situation is not improving. We are concerned that the fragmentation of the country and its public administration system are hindering the solution of the numerous problems that the country faces in the fields of security and socioeconomics. Libya is still painfully recovering from the impact of the political intervention of 2011.

The ongoing confrontation between Tripoli and Tobruk has led to an actual paralysis of the Government's administrative system. One of the latest alarm signals of general instability is the fighting in the area of the so-called oil crescent, as well as in the south of the country. Against the backdrop of the power vacuum, we have seen the presence of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaeda, as well as the activities of local extremist groups. The problem of the spread of terrorism is especially urgent, given Libya's porous borders and the absence of centralized law-enforcement agencies. We are concerned that as a result of counter-terrorist actions, some militants have subsequently scattered to various corners of the country, which might lead to the formation of sleeper cells.

The negative impact of the situation in Libya is being felt in Europe, which has had to deal with the influx of illegal migrants trying to cross over to the European continent from Libyan territory. Similar problems include the aggravated problems of cross-border crime, arms smuggling and drug trafficking.

We see a potentially constructive role played by Libya's neighbours in suppressing such threats. We note the importance of the implementation of resolution 2259 (2015), which established the Libyan Political Agreement as the basis for the settlement of the conflict. Unfortunately, there has been almost no progress in implementing the Skhirat Agreement. The main tasks of the transition period have not been fulfilled. For example, the work on the text of the Constitution has not been completed, general elections have not been held, and as a result permanent bodies of power still need be formed. It is good that the Libyan parties have declared their readiness for dialogue, but additional efforts will be required in order to reach a clear understanding of the parameters of national reconciliation, including the formation of national authorities.

The Presidency Council in Tripoli cannot seriously expand the base of its support and become an institution of power trusted by broad sections of the population throughout the country. The capital is controlled by numerous armed groups and not all of them are loyal to the Presidency Council. The prospects for the establishment of the Presidential Guard are still unclear. Moreover, it is unclear how its formation connects with the key task of creating unified power structures. The membership of the Government of National Accord has not been endorsed by the House of Representatives, as required by the Skhirat Agreement.

The myriad interrelated problems dictate the urgent need for vigorous international support for the political process in Libya, which could reduce the likelihood of further negative development of the situation on the

ground. There is no alternative to continuing, under the auspices of the United Nations, to work painstakingly with the representatives of all major political forces, regions and tribal groups. It is necessary to help them overcome their internal disagreements and find mutually acceptable solutions to the remaining controversial issues. That work needs to be intensified and provided with specific ideas. We cannot leave anyone on the sidelines, as some Western countries have done with the introduction of unilateral sanctions. In that case, the gradual return to the country of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya must be strictly related to the security situation.

Libya should not allow room for unhealthy competition, which will only complicate the prospects for settlement. Therefore, we attach great importance to the consolidation of international efforts, including their important elements in forums such as the African Union, the League of Arab States and neighbouring countries of Libya. The development of a common position by regional forces would be very helpful, since a stable and secure Libya would meet their long-term interests. We look forward to continuing the work of the Rome format, with the participation of all interested parties. It would be wrong to allow its fragmentation and gradual demise.

One of the key areas that requires our attention is the promotion of the unification of power structures. At the same time, it would be a mistake to marginalize the Libyan National Army, since the Army could form the basis for future unified armed forces. A united Libyan National Army under central command could become a reliable recipient of international military assistance. Given the current uncertainty, we believe that it would be premature to start talking about the full or partial lifting of the arms embargo imposed on Libya by Security Council decision.

The fate of the country should be decided by the Libyans themselves. Trying to provide them with ready-made solutions is counterproductive. That said, at the heart of the Libyan political process should be the refusal of all parties involved to resolve the crisis through force. The only way out of the impasse must be found through joint efforts at the negotiating table.

We believe that it is a mistake for some capitals to support Tripoli against Tobruq. We should not pit one set of Libyans against another. That kind of one-sided policy has become a reason for the slow-down of the political process. We would like to hope that the many foreign military presences in Libya will not contribute to the further disintegration of the country and its institutions. The efforts of European countries to fight the illegal migration passing through Libyan territory and the measures they have taken to do so should not go further than their declared purposes.

Russia's position is consistent. Guided by the priority task of maintaining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Libya, we have been working with all the power centres by encouraging them to overcome their differences. Given Libya's particular situation, it is the only proper approach.

In general, the international community faces the difficult task of preventing the country's disintegration and collapse. It is in our interests to ensure that Libya emerges from its protracted crisis as quickly as possible, that it re-emerges as a stable State, sustained by its strong institutions, a functional army and law-enforcement structure and that it can regain its status as an important player in the Middle East. A strong, lasting settlement would not only respond to the hopes and interests of the Libyans themselves, it would also have a salutary effect on the Middle East and North Africa in general. For that, we need coordinated action on the part of all interested parties, and we are ready for such cooperation.

Mr. Llorentty Soliz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Madam President, for convening today's meeting. The Plurinational State of Bolivia is grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Mr. Martin Kobler, for his briefing. We would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Sweden, Ambassador Olof Skoog, for his briefing, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, and reiterate that he has the support of our delegation in his work.

We welcome the efforts to support the Libyan political process by both international and regional actors, including the African Union, the League of Arab States and Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria individually, and particularly their willingness to strengthen dialogue, while respecting Libya's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Nonetheless, we are deeply concerned about the escalation of violence in Libya.

According to UNSMIL's report, it has resulted in the deaths of more than 100 people and hundreds more injured between December 2016 and March. We should remind all the parties involved that the only solution to the conflict lies in the political transition that is already under way and must continue. We therefore urge them to put aside any belligerence or notion that weapons are the way to resolve this or any other conflict.

We are also concerned about the plight of internally displaced persons. According to the 18 April report of the International Organization for Migration, their numbers have now reached more than 290,000, owing to the constant clashes between the various armed groups. And we are very concerned about the worsening plight of refugees. According to a statement on 22 March by Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights Kate Gilmore at the thirty-fourth regular session of the Human Right Council,

> "[M]igrants in Libya continue to be held arbitrarily for indefinite periods with no due process guarantees, legal recourse or review. They commonly face inhuman conditions and horrific abuse. Often it is armed brigades who exert direct or indirect control over these centres, including official detention centres, meaning there is no effective protection against abuse".

In that regard, we urge the parties and armed actors to cease all violent attacks on innocent civilians who play no part in the conflict and to honour their obligations under international law.

We acknowledge and encourage the resolute efforts of the Government and the people of Libya to combat terrorism, while emphasizing that as areas are liberated, the humanitarian assistance that the people need can be correspondingly facilitated and guaranteed. We reiterate our firm condemnation of terrorism and all forms of political, social and economic violence as unjustifiable and criminal, regardless of their motivation and wherever, whenever and by whomever they are committed. We also encourage Libyan institutions and United Nations agencies and services such as the United Nations Mine Action Service to continue to make every effort to neutralize the improvised explosive devices that can still be found in areas that have been liberated from Da'esh and remain a threat to the life and physical well-being of civilians.

Finally, we welcome the fact that the Libyan Presidency Council has approved its budget framework for 2017. In that regard, we call on all parties concerned to be ready and willing to reach common ground and take the positive steps that can enable the Libyan Political Agreement to be implemented effectively, as an inclusive process designed and conducted to benefit the Libyan people. We also acknowledge the progress made on the Libyan Political Agreement and the assistance provided by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya during the reporting period. We stress that all efforts by the Security Council must be aimed at achieving a peaceful solution that is in the overall interest of the Libyan people and respects their rights. To that end, we would like to highlight three points. First, the Libyan State and its institutions must be strengthened. Secondly, Libya's natural resources must controlled and managed by Libyans and all profits from them should be used to benefit Libyans. Lastly, I would like to underscore the primacy of politics as the only way to resolve this and other conflicts.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to thank Mr. Martin Kobler for his briefing on the situation in Libya and for his continued efforts and those of the entire staff of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya to ensure a successful political process there. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya can count on the firm support of the Senegalese delegation. We also support his seven recommendations, which, if implemented by all of the actors and parties involved, could help to secure a lasting political solution to the crisis in Libya. I would also like to commend Ambassador Olof Skoog for his briefing and his leadership as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya.

With regard to the current situation in Libya, which has been characterized by the continued worsening of the tragic plight of migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons who fall victim to various criminal groups, we believe that the Secretary-General's comments in his most recent report on the situation in Libya (S/2017/283) were particularly timely when he stated that

> "there is a need for a comprehensive approach to address the root causes in the countries of origin that drive so many people to take this dangerous journey".

Indeed, the smuggling of and trafficking in human beings in Libya, including migrants, are among

the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that the parties to the conflict in Libya continue to commit, some of which may constitute crimes of war.

The case of women and girls is equally alarming, as they are subjected to conflict-related sexual violence, committed by the parties to the conflict in Libya, as well as by smugglers, traffickers, affiliates of Da'esh in Libya and other criminal groups. This happens even when girls and women are detained in formal and informal detention centres for irregular migrants. In the face of the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation in Libya, we remind all Libyan parties of their duty to protect civilians and of their obligation to respect and implement the provisions of International humanitarian law and human rights.

At the political level, my delegation would like to emphasize that the impasse in Libya does not allow for the stimulation of the country's already fragile economy. Of course, we are pleased that the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord has been able to draw up and implement the budget for the current year, and we call for improved collaboration with all Libyan financial institutions in order to better confront shortages of funds and liquidity, and to provide more services to the population. However, on the security front, my delegation regrets the recent fighting in the oil crescent and in the capital, Tripoli. We believe that the progress made in restoring oil production and exports could be compromised by the continuation of such clashes.

We are also concerned that Libya remains an enabling environment for terrorist group activities, despite the liberation of the cities of Sirte and Benghazi from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The presence of the ISIL in Libya shows the urgent need to establish strong and unified governmental institutions and security structures throughout the country in order to contain this threat.

The necessary unification of all military and security forces under the authority of the Government of National Accord is one of the main challenges of the Presidency Council, as the situation remains precarious throughout Libyan territory with consequences that are felt both nationally and regionally. Whether it concerns the plight of migrants in Libya, the fragile economic situation of the country, humanitarian or security challenges, my delegation remains convinced of the need to address them in the overall framework of the search for a political solution to the Libyan crisis. There can be no military solution, no matter where it comes from, to this conflict.

As such, like the majority of Libyan stakeholders and the international community, including the African Union, we support the Libyan Political Agreement, while taking note of the wish expressed widely by Libyans to amend it. We would therefore like to invite all Libyan parties to work to overcome their political differences through dialogue, which is the only way to preserve the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya. That dialogue, of course, should be as inclusive and representative as possible and extended, in particular, to all tribes, women's groups and youth groups with a view to initiating a process of local and national reconciliation carried out by Libyans themselves, with the good offices of the United Nations. Issues that hamper the implementation of the Political Agreement at the executive and security levels should be high on the agenda of this dialogue.

My delegation hopes that, in the case of Libya, we will not lose sight of the principle that sanctions are a means of restoring peace and security and not an end in themselves.

Finally, while welcoming the ongoing efforts made by neighbouring countries and the quartet with regard to Libya, my delegation wishes to reiterate to the international community the appeal made by the African Union through its High-level Committee on Libya, calling for a better coordination of efforts in support of Libya, among the various countries and organizations concerned, and with all Libyan actors, with a view to advancing the political process for the restoration of peace and stability in Libya.

Mr. Sadykov (Kazakstan): We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Mr. Kobler, and Ambassador Olof Skoog for their briefings.

My delegation would like to make the following observations and recommendations. Kazakhstan reiterates its commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya and its institutions under the Libyan Political Agreement, which must be Libyan led and Libyan owned. There is no military solution to the crisis. Rather, the solution involves inclusive

political dialogue, confidence-building measures and national reconciliation.

We commend the ongoing mediation efforts of the Special Representative, UNSMIL, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the European Union. Moreover, we fully endorse the Secretary-General's recommendations, which should be fully implemented in cooperation with regional actors, as well as neighbouring countries, including Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria, to support the Libyan political process.

We express our deep concern over the renewed military escalation and the fragile security situation, which can undermine the political process and create a breeding ground for terrorist and violent extremist groups, including affiliates of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and Al-Qaida. What is necessary is to immediately focus on the largely unaddressed structural political issues and the multiplicity of armed actors on the group with conflicting agendas. Therefore, every effort must be made to build and strengthen State structures, the armed forces and the security sector, which will in turn enhance political stability.

Regarding the economy, the vulnerabilities of Libyan society can be overcome only with investments in sustainable development to ensure socioeconomic stability and meeting basic needs to support the political process.

The deteriorating humanitarian situation in Libya is in urgent need of our attention. Combating transnational crime, especially in illegal migration, human and drug trafficking, with the support of UNSMIL, the United nations system and other international partners, is equally critical, and we call for coordinated and comprehensive actions in that regard.

The Security Council should therefore play a more urgent and proactive role in the resolution of the Libyan issue, which must not be lost among other pressing crises. It is necessary to send a clear message to all parties for the immediate cessation of military operations, the de-escalation of tensions and engagement in political dialogue.

Finally, it is increasingly important that all countries fully implement all sanctions measures imposed by Security Council resolutions on Libya with regard to an arms embargo, the travel ban, the assets freeze and the illicit export of crude oil. Kazakhstan is ready to work with Council members in support of peace, security and stability in Libya.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the United States of America.

I want to thank again Mr. Kobler, as well as Ambassador Skoog, for their briefings and their insight.

The stakes for achieving stability in Libya are high. Heavily armed factions are fighting each other to control land and resources. Thousands of desperate migrants die every year after setting sail from Libya's shores. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and other violent extremist groups are looking for safe havens in places that are beyond the Government's authority. The Libyan people are suffering. For too many Libyans, the promise of throwing off a brutal dictator has been replaced by the reality of harsh conditions and life under militias. The effects of that instability are spreading throughout North Africa and across the Mediterranean.

It does not have to be that way. If Libya's leaders can work together, Libya can, with the support of the United Nations and the international community, start to rebuild. That path starts with a national political reconciliation among Libya's parties. The status quo, with various officials all claiming to speak for the Libyan people, is not sustainable. It does nothing to re-establish the institutions and the security that the Libyan people crave.

The United States believes that the best way to resolve differences is through a Libyan-led dialogue with the support of the United Nations and the international community. All parties should immediately commit to that process. If the parties do not come together soon, Libya will only grow more dangerous and difficult to govern. That is an outcome that no party should want.

The Libyan Political Agreement remains the framework that Libyans have agreed on for their country's transition. It is the road map towards a democratic Libyan State — one in which all Libyans can have a say. Implementing the Agreement is vital to restoring stability. The United States welcomes indications of support from many parties for the Agreement. At the same time, we call on those who have not yet dedicated themselves to engaging in the process and ask them to do so immediately. There may need to be certain amendments to the Agreement, but the important point is that every Libyan faction needs to come together in a national dialogue and agree on how

to carry out its terms. Dialogue and compromise — that is what the United States urges the parties to engage in.

But some actors have pursued destabilizing military operations, while refusing to fully commit to finding political agreement. Violence on the ground has escalated in recent weeks. Conflict now looms at Tamehint airfield, where forces aligned with the United Nations-recognized Government were recently attacked by a rival group. Such destabilizing attacks are unacceptable. They must stop now. When Libya's factions keep fighting instead of talking, the biggest winners are the terrorist groups.

Libya's security cannot rest in the hands of various separate factions. The country deserves a national, unified military under civilian oversight. Moving forward in Libya requires building up such a force — one that is capable of securing the country. That is an extremely tough task. Libya's international parties need to be clear in pushing for a single Government security force.

Finally, the Libyan Government of National Accord must deliver for the country's people, but the Government cannot function unless it has control over the resources that provide its budget. Libya's oil wealth can help fund the restoration of public services, including policing and other security measures. The United Nations and Libya's international partners must help the Government of National Accord manage the country's resources, so that the Government can help ordinary Libyans with their everyday needs. That is why Libya's oil and petroleum industry must be safeguarded for the benefit of the country's people. When groups try to smuggle Libyan oil out of the country, they are smuggling away Libya's future. Those are funds that would otherwise help rebuild Libya's shattered economy. So, we in the Council need to take an unequivocal stand against oil smuggling from Libya in all of its forms. The international community must work closely with the Government of National Accord and the National Oil Corporation, which is based in the capital, to shut those rogue operations down. That is what the resolutions of the Security Council demand.

None of that will be easy. Libya faces an immensely challenging road ahead to rebuild its institutions and recover from years of civil war. The first step, though, is clear. Libya's leaders need to come together in support of a single Government and a single military. They need to talk through their differences, not fight them out, and they need to compromise. That is the message that each of us on the Council needs to bring to the parties. That is how we can one day stop talking about Libya as a threat to peace and security, and instead focus on the opportunities that Libya has to thrive.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to representative of Libya.

Mr. Elmajerbi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Madam, on your presidency of the Security Council during this month. I would like to thank His Excellency the Secretary-General for his report (S/2017/283) on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Martin Kobler, for his efforts to help the parties in Libya reach a compromise and for his important briefing on the most recent developments in Libya and Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden, for his briefing in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya.

I would like to reiterate that the Government of National Accord supports all United Nations efforts aimed at achieving a solution to the political stalemate in Libya with a view to ensuring stability in the country and alleviating the suffering of its people. The ongoing political division and the deteriorating security conditions, in addition to a variety of difficult circumstances, undoubtedly cast a shadow over Libya at various levels and exacerbate the suffering of the Libyan people on a daily basis, despite the serious efforts by the Government of National Accord to salvage the situation and overcome the stalemate and the worsening difficulties. We reiterate the importance of reaching an inclusive political solution among the actors so as to put an end to the division in Libya, relying on the framework of the Libyan Political Agreement.

The threat of violence and force by any party can have only very negative consequences on the security and stability in the country. In that regard, we pay tribute to all of the initiatives and efforts of the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the African Union, in addition to those of neighbouring and fraternal countries, for their efforts to mend the rift between the parties in Libya and to establish peace and security throughout the country. We hope that their constructive efforts will continue to address the political stalemate

and allow them to reach a compromise and minimize the tension among the various parties.

We also reiterate that the Libyan Political Agreement might need limited amendments, especially on the agreement of the political stakeholders. We do not think that that is impossible. It could be achieved by way of a constructive dialogue among the parties to the dispute. In that regard, we welcome the decision of the Libyan House of Representatives regarding the resumption of political dialogue. We consider that to be a very important step towards a final inclusive solution to the crisis in Libya.

Since the Libyan Political Agreement was signed on 17 December 2015, the Government of National Accord has faced and continues to face many challenges, but it has managed to take important steps aimed at delivering its citizens from their suffering, which are related to the country's socioeconomic and security problems. The Government operationalized the institutions of the country and adopted the 2017 budget, so as to be able to deliver basic services to its citizens, establish peace and combat terrorism, irregular and illegal migration and the smuggling of petroleum products. The Government of National Accord is also facing many challenges, and in that regard we commend the sacrifices and efforts made by all the people of Libya, especially in the two cities of Sirte and Benghazi — which have resulted in a lull in terrorist group activities. It is highly necessary in that respect to have a unified national army to work under the political leadership of the country and in accordance with globally recognized professional and military procedures.

In connection with the Presidential Guard, the Presidential Council is making ongoing efforts to set up the system, in coordination with the command of the Presidential Guard and Lieutenant-General Paolo Serra, the Senior Advisor to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on security sector matters. We call on the international community to support the system, exempt it from the weapons embargo and provide it with all of the important equipment that it needs to undertake its mission, which is to safeguard governmental institutions. We also call for the Libyan National Army to be exempted from the weapons embargo, so that it can uphold its counter-terrorism mission throughout Libya.

The unjustified and sudden military escalation around Tamanhint airport, which started with heavy artillery and aircraft strikes in recent days and resulted in heavy casualties and damage to facilities, has brought the country to the brink of civil war and may even have dealt a very strong blow to all of the de-escalation and settlement efforts for which we have been calling. Everyone knows that the targeting of those areas has nothing to do with the war against terrorism. We welcome the call issued by the ambassadors of the permanent five on 12 April for the de-escalation and immediate cessation of all hostilities. Nevertheless, the violations and land and air attacks continue. All of that notwithstanding, the Presidential Council has established a ministerial committee to de-escalate and minimize the tension, as mentioned in the letter by the head of the Presidential Council on 16 April to the international community, aimed at immediately urging those responsible for the escalation to cease their activities.

The human rights situation in Libya remains a cause for great concern, especially owing to the ongoing violations taking place for political reasons or for extortion and ransom, not to mention the suffering of civilians under the military operations and indiscriminate bombing, and the illegal migrants exposed to grave abuses. We reiterate that it will be difficult to address all of those issues unless stability is restored throughout the national territory and until we rid ourselves of the rampant armed groups. To that end, agreement must be reached between the Presidential Council and the House of Representatives, so that the Government of National Accord can undertake its mission, as required.

Based on the principle of national ownership, we call on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to cooperate and coordinate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in preparing reports, especially some that are not included in the Mission's mandate — such as a report on illegal migrants in Libya. Indeed, illegal migrants transiting through Libyan territories suffer, and we therefore hope for future coordination with the Libyan authorities to address that issue. UNSMIL's positions should be reflected in writing instead of on Twitter, because tweets might inflame public opinion.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Kobler to respond to comments.

Mr. Kobler: I am grateful for the solidarity expressed around the table in the Security Council. The

solidarity and cohesion of the Council is an important message. It is an important signal for those in Libya who seek procrastination and delay instead of progress and stability. I also appreciate the messages of support from my colleagues in particular, who increasingly work inside Libya on a daily basis in order to make life better for the Libyans.

I would like to comment briefly on the situation in the south, which is a matter of great concern for us. Many here have rightly said that there is a difference between the fight against terrorism and just taking an airport and achieving territorial gains. The humanitarian situation in the south, in Tamanhint and the town is, to say the least, very difficult. There are internally displaced persons, so any fighting aggravates the humanitarian situation, and people leave the areas where they reside. That is the case in Tamanhint. We try our best to not only politically urge interlocutors to stop the fighting but also to relieve the humanitarian situation. There is only one hospital left, and it has neither medicine nor equipment. We have tried to go there to advocate for allowing relief and humanitarian goods into the hospitals and the area.

Many have mentioned the situation in the detention centres, and I cannot but underline the importance of human security in Libya, which extends far beyond the detention centres. I bring to the Council's attention the situation in prisons, which was not mentioned. The situation for prisoners in Libya is not better than for those in the detention centres — with overcrowding and bad health conditions. It is the lack of accountability, the lack of State structure and the failure to restore the needed State authority throughout the country. We should not forget the many thousands who are subject to torture and arbitrary detention in Libya. The restitution of State authority is progressing. However, the situation in detention centres was duly noted. I personally try to go to those detention centres at least once a month, and I see the overcrowding, the health situation and the problems that the detainees face.

The solution is not only in the repressive means of closing the borders but also in the repatriation of those who are in the detention centres. The International Organization for Migration does a great deal to repatriate between 100 and 200 people every week to their countries of origin. But, given the thousands that are there, it is only a drop in the ocean of illegal migration.

I floated the idea with the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court as to whether it would be possible to consider human trafficking as a crime against humanity, given the thousands of people who have drowned and the irresponsible behaviour and the lack of accountability of human traffickers operating in Libya. I think that the relationship between human security, human rights for everybody and political security is obvious. I am very glad that the Council is also addressing that problem.

With respect to the illegal flow of arms, Libya has 20 million weapons. With a population of only 6 million people, that is really a problem. I always say, and I have said it to the Security Council in previous consultations: weapons come from somewhere — they do not just magically appear — they come by air, they come by sea, they come by land. Exports of illicit oil and diesel find their way to other countries through smuggling. I genuinely appreciate the Council's endeavour to block the illegal import of weapons and the smuggling routes, because it is very important to do it in a legal way via the United Nations Sanctions Committee, with exemptions if that is desirable, or through the lifting of the weapons embargo, but it is up to the Sanctions Committee to make the appropriate recommendation.

Let me conclude by going a bit beyond 2017 and 2018 in strategic terms. In 2050, Africa will have 2.4 billion inhabitants, nearly doubling its population size from 1.4 billion now to 2.4 billion, so it is easy to imagine what we can expect in terms of population movements, not in the short term, but in the medium and long term. However, Libya, a large country, will have only 9 million inhabitants in 2050. As a country that is large and rich, but does not have a sizeable population, Libya will be strategically facing large immigration waves early in the years 2030, 2040 and 2050.

I therefore think that we should reflect upon how we stabilize the country beyond the short term. It is important not to lose sight of a strategic vision for the future. Something dramatic has to happen if we are to be able to cope with the problem of 2.4 billion people in sub-Saharan Africa, 70 per cent of whom will be between the ages of 15 and 29. The so-called youth bulge and the youth problem, combined with enormous population growth, particularly in the Niger and Chad, Libya's direct neighbours, which will show enormous population growth of an order not shared by other countries, must be kept in mind, as we strategically think about the future. Human security, the strategic

lines of Libyan population growth and the youth bulge all over the continent are all topics that are important to consider.

I thank the Council members for their great support, for the solidarity they have been showing and for the important signal that this meeting has sent today to the Libyans themselves.

The President: I thank Mr. Kobler for his clarification and his comments. We understand that this solidarity is what he needs to push harder in his role, and we encourage him to continue moving in the right direction. We appreciate his efforts.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.